

Monterey County Animal Services Bureau



Policy Title: Request for Reduced or Waived Fees

Last Update: New Policy

Date: August 23rd, 2021

Effective: October 1, 2021

Purpose:

To establish a consistent process based on pre-determined criteria that enable the Animal Services (A.S) staff to review and accept requests for the reduction or waiving of Animal Services fees based on financial need or for compassionate reasons.

General:

Fees are determined with the intent that fees are reasonable for individuals and offset the costs of specific services provided by Animal Services that the Monterey County General Fund supports. The ability to waive or reduce fees in instances when pet owners experience hardship relating to the care of their pets enables A.S. staff to avoid situations where they must refuse to allow some owners to claim their animal based upon financial constraint or hardship.

Fees are not to be waived unless it is deemed appropriate by the designated authority to reduce or waive fees within the parameters of this policy. Fees may be reduced or waived:

- a. If in the opinion of the Animal Services Administrator (ASA) or designee, that the number of dogs or cats in the shelter is at or near capacity, the dogs or cats in the shelters do not meet the general adoption criteria, or it is appropriate to promote dog or cat adoptions; or
- b. For financial or compassionate reasons acceptable to the ASA or designee.
 - i. Service fees that are eligible to be considered for reduction or being waived include:
 - Dog License fee
 - Micro-chip
 - Spay/Neuter
 - Boarding (Regular or Quarantine)
 - Shelter Impound
 - Owner Surrender
 - Vaccination (DHPP, FVRCP, Rabies)
 - Adoption
 - Euthanasia

Procedure:

Requests for reduced or waived fees from individuals must be submitted in writing to Animal Services. Applicants must meet the criteria for financial and/or compassionate reasons satisfactory to the ASA or designee (see attached request form).

A. Request for a Fee Reduction/Waiver

i. A.S. staff to review completed form

1. A request for fees to be reduced/waived due to financial or compassionate reasons must meet ALL of the following criteria:
 - a. Must be a resident of unincorporated Monterey County or City of Salinas (unless extenuating circumstances exist).
 - b. Must be at least 18 years of age.
 - c. Must be the owner of the domestic animal.
 - d. The dog or cat must be currently licensed, as required.
 - e. Must not have any prior outstanding fees within the last year.
 - f. Must demonstrate financial/compassionate hardship to AS staff and provide appropriate documentations as requested.
(i.e. documents sufficient to show that the person/family is below \$200% of the Federal Poverty Level Guidelines based on family size and income range (attached)).

ii. A.S. staff will complete page 2, identifying the financial document or noting the compassionate reason for reducing/waiving fees and submit the request for approval to the ASA or designee.

1. Staff will recommend which fees to be waived/reduced based on communication/discussion with resident at time of transaction. Some fees may be waived while others are not, all determined case by case.
2. Impound Fee Exception:
Impound fees are linked to enforcement action under City and County ordinances, related to dog at large, with the aim to modify the behavior of the dog owner so that the offense is not repeated. Where Animal Services records multiple dog running at large violations, fees will only be reduced/waived for the first impound. Fees will not be reduced/waived for subsequent violation of a dog at large related impoundment.
- 3.

iii. ASA or designee must approve the request and indicate the authorized reduction amount on the form.

1. Multiple Reduced/Waived Fee requests:
ASA or designee will review, on a case by case basis, any subsequent requests for reduced/waived fees not due to multiple dog running at large violations.

B. Fee Reduction Recording

- i. The authorized Request for Reduced or Waived Fees will be maintained on record.
- ii. Once approved, documentation demonstrating financial hardship will be immediately destroyed.
- iii. Reduced or waived fees will be tracked in Chameleon accordingly.

C. Generating a report for reduced/waived fees.

- i. Animal Services will report, as required, the total amount of reduced/waived fees.

Animal Services

Financial guide for requests for financial hardship

Federal Poverty Level – up to 200%
2-1-2021 to 3-31-2022

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/02/01/2021-01969/annual-update-of-the-hhs-poverty-guidelines>

Persons submitting a request to Animal Services for financial hardship must provide documentation to support annual income up to 200% of Federal Poverty Level.

Family Size	Annual Income Level up to 200% of FPL
1	\$25,760.00
2	\$37,840.00
3	\$43,920.00
4	\$53,000.00
5	\$62,080.00
6	\$71,160.00
7	\$80,240.00
8	\$89,320.00
9	\$98,400.00
10	\$107,480.00

The following items are accepted as proof of income:

- *Less than 30 days old Alimony checks*
- *Copies of check stubs (for one month)*
- *Workers Compensation, SDI, social security, unemployment benefits or pension check stubs*
- *Current Income Tax Return (the 1040 form)*
- *General Assistance Statement from Department of Social Services*
- *Social Security retirement check or conformation letter or verification of direct deposit*
- *Signed Statement from employer (if wages paid in cash)*
- *Other private or employer pension check stubs*



Animal Services

Request for Reduced or Waived Fees

Requests for reduced or waived fees must be submitted in writing to Monterey County Animal Services and demonstrate the criteria for financial or compassionate reasons that are satisfactory to the Animal Services Administrator or designee.

Criteria for Reduced or Waived Fees due to Financial or Compassionate Reasons

1. Must be a resident of unincorporated Monterey County or City of Salinas (unless extenuating circumstances exist).
2. Must be at least 18 years of age.
3. Must be the owner of the domestic animal(s).
4. The dog or cat must be currently licensed, as required.
5. Must not have any prior outstanding fees within the last year.
6. Must demonstrate financial/compassionate hardship to AS staff and provide appropriate documentations as requested.

Requestor's Information and Declaration

Full Name _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Primary Phone # _____ Secondary Phone # _____

Email Address _____

I, _____, do declare the following:
(Print full name)

- I am a resident of unincorporated Monterey County or City of Salinas.
- I am at least 18 years of age.
- I am the owner of the described animal(s).
- The animals are licensed with Animal Services.
- I have no prior outstanding unpaid fees within the last year.
- I have demonstrated financial need or compassionate hardship to Animal Services.

Signature _____

Date _____

<u>Animal Name</u>	<u>Animal ID</u>	<u>Species</u>

For Animal Services Use Only

ACO/Staff Name _____ Date _____

Financial Document Observed _____

Summary of Hardship _____

Approving Supervisor _____

Fees approved to be reduced/waived:

Applicable Fees	Waived (Yes or No)	Reduced Amount/Quantity
Dog License		
Micro-chip		
Spay/Neuter		
Board (Regular or Quarantine)		
Home Quarantine		
Shelter Impound		
Owner Surrender		
Vaccination (DHpp, FVRCP, Rabies)		
Adoption		
Euthanasia		

Receipt Number: R _____ - _____